Turf Tips, Quips

By Doc Minard

After testing the earlier post times for almost two months, the Detroit Race Course management has decided to move the starting time for the first race on Saturdays from 1 p.m. to 1:30.

The shift was announced earlier in the week by Vice President and General Manager Dick Wilson. That's the only change planned for this meeting.

Wilson announced at the start of the 90-day season the DRC would try the earlier post times – 1 p.m. on Saturdays and holidays to 2:30 on weekdays – to see how fans reacted.

The new time scheduled was in direct contrast to the 2:30 post on Saturdays and holidays and 3:30 p.m. on weekdays.

Wilson pointed out then that he planned to keep the earlier post times for the season. His board of directors met last week, agreed with his policy and approved the 1:30 p.m. shift only after it was explained thousands of patrons were arriving around 1 p.m. and the traffic jam was so big that many didn't get inside the grounds until the start of the second race.

"We are pleased with the way our patrons accepted the new post time," said Wilson. "But we decided to move the Saturday and holidays post to 1:30 p.m. and give fans a better chance to get inside the gates for the first race."

Most of the better distance stars will tangle in the mile and an eighth handicap that headlines today's (Saturday) program.

Racing Secretary Norris Gwinn has a field of 10 going in the ninth race and believes it will be one of the most evenly matched events of the season.

Heading the cast are: Knitted Gloves, Aterradora and Light Charger. The last mentioned came from far back in a distance event a week ago to win going away and could be the favorite this time.

Others in the field are: First Tee, Oklahoma Lil, Miss Ditto, Bold Pride, Haddit, Breakwater and Hayalong.

Incidentally, Jockey Larry Snyder and Trainer Jack Van Berg are maintaining their winning ways.

With two months remaining of the meeting, Van Berg has a total of 45 winners, far ahead of the 17 for second place Bob Irwin.

Snyder, perennial champion at the DRC, appears to have the 1973 title well in hand. In fact Larry is so far ahead of his rivals that he could go the rest of the meeting without a victory and still win.

At the last reading, Snyder had a total of 87 wins and 55 seconds with his nearest challenger, Ramon Perez, showing only 39 firsts.

Blu Fireball, a speedy Michiganbred at the top of his form, will go after his second straight invitational victory in the $8,000 invitational pace that headlines Saturday's program at Hazel Park.

Driver-trainer Clyde Snook, one of the veterans of the Detroit area harness racing circuit, isn't predicting a victory but he is confident of one thing: Blu Fireball will be there or thereabouts when the pacers hit the finish line.

Blu Fireball has started 17 times this year and has been in the money a dozen times. The four year old has earned more than $40,000 in less than four months and doesn't appear to have reached top form.

He has posted two firsts, two thirds and a second at Hazel Park. He traveled the mile in 2:00.2 in his most recent victory, placing him with the fastest and best at the track.

The invitational drew a field of six but so evenly matched that the final clocking could find as many as five cracking the 2:00 barrier.

The list includes: Shady Mile, winner of three in a row earlier in the meeting; Shiaway Lad, who won two and is considered a definite threat this time; Whirlaway, star of the Joe Adamsky stable; Michigan Mack and Grover C.

Once again Racing Secretary Bill Connors has arranged an all-pacing program which includes a $7,400 preferred with such fast ones as Echo's Caper, True Temper, Knox Patch, J.R. Rocky, Shady Counsel, Fantasy Girl and Sammy Key.

RU Ties North, Nips Belleville

Redford Union tied North Farmington in a cross country triangular and tipped Belleville in a Suburban Eight match to stand 3-3 overall and 2-0 in Eight competition.

It was RU and North Farmington with 28 points each in the triangular and Farmington Harrison was third with 61.

The Sub Eight outing saw RU edge Belleville, 26-29, at the Eastern Michigan course.

RU's Ed Boynton took first place honors in the triangular with the two Farmington schools, clocking in at 17:42. North took second and third with Paul Hebelern (17:54) and Keith Baily (18:02).

Fourth was taken by Jim Haggart of RU in 18:11 with Bill Schaffer of North fifth at 18:21, followed by RU's Mike Hasty at 18:26, and North's Mike Carney seventh at 18:31.

RU took eighth, ninth and 10th places in Doug Milne (18:37), Jim Olson (18:42) and John Shannon (18:50). North's Carl Davis came in 11th at 18:59 with Harrison's first finisher placing 12th in Jim Delano at 19:00.

The Panthers captured the Eight meet over Belleville by taking four of the first six places.

Belleville's Bob Conrad ran first at 16:36 with RU's Milne second at 16:43 followed by Mike Yonge of Belleville at 16:57.

It was then three Panthers in Haggart (16:59), Boynton (17:00) and Hasty (17:06) followed by Greca (17:13) and Hau (17:19) of Belleville and Olson of RU at 17:23.

Jaycees Host Racing Card For Students

Garden City, Livonia, Northville, Plymouth, Wayne and Westland students will be offered the opportunity to race their cars and bikes under National Hot Rod Association sanctioned conditions on Saturday, Sept. 29, at 9 a.m. at the Milan Dragway.

The event sponsored by the District 30 Jaycees will be under guidance of professional racing drivers.

For additional information, Richard Buck of the Garden City Jaycees should be contacted.

Pathos With A Catcher's Mitt

By JAN WILLIAMS

BANG THE DRUM SLOWLY
now showing at Terrace
Rating: PG

Baseball's version of "Brian's Song" has been well executed in "Bang The Drum Slowly." And even though it isn't a true story, the fate of Bruce Pearson will touch more hearts, hopefully, than that of Brian Piccolo.

Pearson, portrayed by Robert DeNiro, isn't cast as a baseball superstar with a promising career ahead of him. He's a born loser and he knows it. He falls in love with the wrong girls, chews tobacco, is unlettered, dumb and dying.

As a catcher for the New York Mammoths (Yankees), Pearson is tagged just "plumb dumb" by the team manager (Vincent Gardenia). And he's constantly "ragged" by his teammates.

His only friend seems to be his roommate, ace pitcher Henry Wiggen (Michael Moriarty).

Prior to spring training, Wiggen takes Pearson to Mayo Clinic where he finds he has Hodgkin's disease. Trying to keep the secret from the rest of the team and the manager proves to be quite a task.

Wiggen learns Pearson is going to be sent to the farm team and refuses to sign his contract unless they agree to keep Pearson, too. When the manager finally gives in to his terms, he begins an amusing investigation to find out why Wiggen is so attached to Pearson.

Eventually the whole team finds out about Pearson and finally accept him as a friend and teammate.

When Pearson's time is up, there's a moving scene as he says goodbye to Wiggen. But there are no long, drawn out farewells or dying scenes.

Pearson leaves for his Georgia home, and the team continues to play ball. They win the World Series and Pearson dies. And nobody from the team goes to the funeral except Wiggen.

Director John Hancock ("Sticky My Fingers, Fleet My Feet") does a good job of exploring human relationships and friendships in this film.

It's not heavy on baseball, so women can enjoy it. And it's not too heavy on sentimentality, so men can enjoy it.

There's very little material objectionable for kids, so actually it's a good way for the whole family to spend a couple of hours.

Casting Call

The Franklin Village Players will hold open tryouts for their fall production of "Strange Bedfellows."

Tryouts will be held Sept. 27 and 28 at 8 p.m. in the Franklin Community Church Social Hall. There are 10 female and five male roles to be filled. Ages of the characters range from 30 to 70.

The play is a turn of the century comedy which takes place during the women's suffrage movement. Production dates are Nov. 29, 30 and Dec. 1.

Ballet/Symphony Performance Set

SOUTHFIELD

The Southfield Ballet Company will appear with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra Tuesday, Sept. 25, in Ford Auditorium.

The two performances at 9 and 11 a.m. are jointly sponsored by the Detroit Board of Education and the symphony.

Lynda Chase of Southfield will be featured as lead dancer in the ballet. Also among the cast are Livonia dancers Corinne Cox, Beth Liles, Becky Blodgett and Kim Ebel.

Auditions for the Southfield Ballet Company's 1973-74 season are held every Thursday at 6 p.m. Contact the ballet company, 16990 12 Mile, Southfield, for an appointment.

Ballet classes are also being offered for credit and non-credit by the Southfield Ballet Company in cooperation with Oakland Community College. They're available to college and high school students with permission of the principal. To enroll contact the Orchard Ridge Campus of the college, 27055 Orchard Lake Road, Farmington.

Rock And Roll Is Revived

A giant Rock and Roll Revival featuring the Ed Sell Production will be the scene in the Plymouth-Canton High School cafeteria Saturday, Sept. 22.

The event, sponsored by the Plymouth YMCA and the Hi-Y Club, is scheduled from 8:30 to 11:30 p.m. Admission is $1.50 per person. Refreshments will be available and dancing will be permitted.

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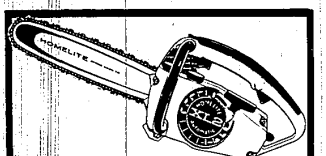
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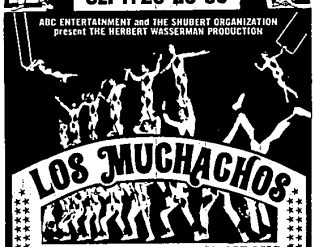
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